

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

**Page 1, line 30 – Replacement Paragraph**

External electrodes ~~3,4,8~~ 100 formed by basic metallization 3, a connecting layer 8 and a reinforcing layer 4 connect the internal electrodes 7. As a result, the internal electrodes 7 on a respective side of the actuator 1 are connected electrically in parallel and thus combined to form a group. The external electrodes ~~3,4~~ 100 are the connecting poles of the actuator. If an electrical voltage is applied to the connecting poles, it is transmitted in parallel to all the internal electrodes 7 and induces an electric field in all the layers of the active material, which deforms mechanically as a result. The sum of all these mechanical deformations is available at the end faces of the actuator as usable expansion 6 and/or force.

**Page 2, line 8, Replacement Paragraph**

The ~~outer external~~ electrodes ~~3,4,8~~ 100 on the piezoceramic multilayer actuators 1 are constructed as follows: a basic metallization 3 is applied to the stack of pressed thin layers 2 of the piezoelectrically active material in the region of the routed-out internal electrodes 10, for example by electroplating methods or screen printing of metal paste. Said basic metallization 3 is reinforced by a further layer 4 composed of a metallic material, for example by a structured metal sheet or a wire lattice. The reinforcing layer 4 is joined to the basic metallization 3, for example, by means of a solder layer 8. The electrical connecting wire 5 is soldered to the reinforcing layer 4.